

# Validium Newsletter

for employees



March 2016

## What is Altruism?



Do you put coins in the hat of someone busking in the street, give some money to the Big Issue sellers, buy a homeless person a coffee, send clothes and toys to charity shops or give up some of your free time to do voluntary work? If the answer to any of these is 'Yes', then you are being altruistic.

In brief, Altruism is the practice of intentional and voluntary actions taken to enhance the welfare of others, without thought of self-benefit or gain. The word itself comes from the French philosopher Auguste Comte. However, some psychologists say that altruism doesn't really exist as we do get something from our unselfish acts – such as a good feeling about ourselves, a sense of connection with others or a smile or 'thank you' from the recipient.

In reality, everyone benefits from giving, as well as receiving, care, concern and consideration. In 2008 a Harvard Business School study found that giving money to someone else lifted participants' happiness more than spending it on themselves! In the same year 'giving' – whether that was money, time or a smile – was identified as one of the 5 pillars of 'wellbeing' by the New Economics Foundation.

For more information go to:

[www.greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/5\\_ways\\_giving\\_is\\_good\\_for\\_you](http://www.greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/5_ways_giving_is_good_for_you)  
[www.neweconomics.org/projects/entry/five-ways-to-well-being](http://www.neweconomics.org/projects/entry/five-ways-to-well-being)

### Did you know?

The Debt team offer information, help and guidance when...

You have pay-day loans but can't meet the payments.

## Making Positive Changes

At the start of the year many of us will have resolved to make some positive changes in our life, but now January has long gone how many of our New Year resolutions have gone with it?

- Why is that?
- What was our motivation?

Was the resolution about something we were told we 'should' be doing rather than 'chose' to do? Was it because we allowed negative thoughts to get in our way? – Thoughts such as 'I don't have time', 'I've got too many other things to cope with' – or was it because the goal was just too big, not achievable, not SMART\*



Whatever the desired change, focus on the positive outcome for you and do it for you. Make it achievable by breaking it down into bite sized pieces that fit into your daily routine. Focus on your achievements, no matter how small, and finally, be kind to yourself if you slip; tomorrow is another day and you can pick yourself up again, if you want to.

If you want help with making change your Validium Helpline is available 24/7.

\*SMART – S = Specific M = Measurable A = Attainable R = Relevant T = Timely



## Curbing the habit

To help to save money, try curbing your daily spending habits. It doesn't matter how many big money decisions you make or how many tough choices you take to get your debt under control: if you're spending too much on day-to-day stuff then you'll struggle to fix your finances.

Find out how to get your daily spending under control by visiting the vClub Debt and Money Blog today!

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## Do I have Postnatal Depression?



Around 1 in 10 women will experience postnatal depression after having a baby but the condition can often be unrecognised. Mood swings, feeling irritable and being tearful are very common after giving birth and these feelings, known as the "baby blues", will usually go away within a few weeks. However, when these symptoms are more persistent, it could be postnatal depression.

Many new Mums have low moods, feel unable to cope and have difficulty sleeping because they are looking after a new baby. Many don't recognise they might have postnatal depression so it can take up to six months before they seek help. Postnatal Depression is an illness that can affect any woman after having a baby and is not a reflection on how much a Mum loves her baby, nor is it a sign that she can't cope, it's just a common illness associated with childbirth.

If you have recently had a baby you could have Postnatal Depression if:

- You are feeling down, depressed or hopeless
- You take little or no pleasure in doing things that would normally make you happy

If you feel like this, please talk to your health visitor or GP because although postnatal depression can be lonely, distressing and frightening, there are many treatments available and it is a temporary condition you can and will recover from.

The cause of postnatal depression isn't clear, but it's thought to be the result of several things, including the physical and emotional stress of looking after a new-born baby.

Lack of sleep and hormonal changes occur shortly after pregnancy, so speak to your health visitor or GP to get help to deal with these and enjoy the time with your new baby.

## Being Helpful

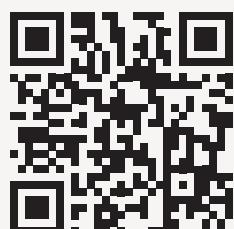


Being helpful is about showing concern and assisting others with matters they may be finding difficult to deal with alone. It can also help to build our own sense of self worth knowing that we have had a positive impact on someone's situation.

Being helpful is often thought of as providing advice or other resources such as money, friendship or shelter, but it can also be as simple as offering a calming influence and a listening ear.

Simply listening to people helps to see their issues from a different perspective and allow them to realise new insights and possible solutions to their problem.

*The articles here do not necessarily represent the opinions or policies of your employer and should not be considered as a definitive health guide. Please refer to other sources for guidance on workplace policies and also on health matters that specifically relate to you.*



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